



Town of *Westford* Massachusetts

Town Manager's Newsletter

July 2021



Jodi Ross,
Town
Manager

jross@westfordma.gov
www.westfordma.gov/tm

Important:
Please sign up to
receive updates on the
latest road construction
in town.

[Subscribe to
Notifications](#)



**Recycling Commission
Composting
Demonstrations
Saturdays:
July 17, 24, 31
9:30AM to 11AM
At the Old Highway
Garage
30 Beacon St
See page 10**



Watch
Meetings Online

westford 
community access television

www.westfordcat.org

Dear Westford residents,

I would like to thank all town officials, town staff, and especially our town residents for participating in another successful Annual Town Meeting. The rain held off, the food trucks arrived, and our town tackled the 23 articles on the warrant! The results of the meeting may be found at the following link: [2021 Annual Town Meeting Results](#). The Select Board discussed the possibility of forming a committee to ask town meeting to change the date of the Annual Town Meeting in the future. They will be discussing this further at their 7/27 meeting.

At their June 22nd meeting, the Select Board recognized Ellen Harde for 35 years of service as a member of the Westford Recycling Commission. During Ellen's time on the Commission, she remained dedicated to educating residents of recycling related issues and also worked diligently to resolve any challenges which arose. She has contributed immensely through the years. At their July 13th meeting, the Select Board thanked Kirk Ware for over 27 years of service to our town, most recently serving 13 years as Vice-Chair of the Permanent Town Building Committee. He has served on countless committees through the years but has resigned as of June 30th as he is moving from town. Paula McWilliams was also recognized for over 23 years of service as a Library Technician and Library Associate at the J.V. Fletcher Library in light of her retirement effective June 30, 2021.

At the Select Board's June 22nd meeting, the board voted to rescind our Local State of Emergency due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Our State Legislature has allowed virtual meetings to continue until April 2022, although many of our town boards have returned to meeting in person. We are currently surveying town officials and staff in an attempt to determine individual board's opinions about continuing some level of virtual or remote meeting access and developing an understanding of the town resources needed to offer differing options.

At that same meeting, Assistant Town Manager Eric Heideman and Finance Director Dan O'Donnell presented Pay-As-You-Throw (PAYT) Program options for solid waste and recycling. The Select Board asked a few questions and continued discussions to a future public meeting.

Assistant Town Manager Eric Heideman, Facilities Director Paul Fox, and Matt Riegert, member of the Clean Energy and Sustainability Committee presented to the Select Board a potential performance contract to implement various energy efficient projects in town and school buildings. The Select Board voted unanimously to authorize the expenditure of \$15,000 from capital appropriations to begin working with an owner's agent to explore the possibility of implementing a performance contract.

After the Select Board re-evaluated the suspended collection of The Roudenbush Community Center Inc.'s rent payments because of the disruption in programming due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the board voted 5-0 to authorize a grant in the form of a rent waiver to TRCCI in the amount of \$25,451 representing the 3rd and 4th quarter lease payments due in Fiscal Year 2021. The Select Board further voted 5-0 to resume TRCCI's regular lease payment obligations on July 1, 2021.

(Continued on next page)

WWW.WESTFORDMA.GOV

At their 7/13 meeting, the Select Board awarded the sale of 63 Main Street to Dianne and Charles Grondine and authorized the Town Manager's Office to initiate a purchase and sale agreement. This agreement will be brought back to the board on 7/27 for consideration.

Mina Hryckowian, Ambassador Girl Scout, appeared before the board on 7/13 and shared a presentation regarding of her Girl Scout Gold Award Project "Project Invisible Link". Her presentation is available at the following link: [Project Invisible Link](#).

The Select Board approved my recommendation to appoint Mark Chambers as Westford's Police Chief effective July 13th, 2021. Mark has served as the "Provisional" or "Acting" Police Chief since Retired Police Chief Tom McEnaney left the department in January 2021. Because we are a Civil Service police department, there was a several month process, which included an assessment center conducted by a firm specializing in such assessments, along with internal interviews conducted by a group of town officials and residents. This group unanimously agreed that Mark was the best candidate for the job. In addition to Mark's promotion, Ron Paulauskas was appointed as Deputy Police Chief and Don Pick was appointed as Police Captain, positions these two officers have held as interims since January 2021. Please join me in wishing Mark, Ron and Don congratulations and best wishes in their new positions.

The Healthy Westford Committee brought a proposal to the board seeking support to develop a wheelchair accessible walking path near Edwards' Beach. The board enthusiastically supported the project. Here is a link with a map of the project: [Proposed Wheelchair Accessible Path](#).

Our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee requested the board support An ACT to reform the hate crime statutes through House Bill No. 1819 and Senate Bill No. 1051. The board members expressed their support of the Bills and approved sending a letter to our State Legislators to indicate this.

The board approved our Special Town Meeting being held on October 18th, 2021, and the meeting timeline which is available at this link: [2021 Special Town Meeting](#).

Please note the Select Board's August 2021 meeting schedule has changed whereas only one meeting will take place on Tuesday, August 17, 2021. All future meetings will begin at 7:30 PM, unless there is an executive session scheduled.

I am saddened to report the passing of William "Bill" Nussbum who passed away on Wednesday, June 23rd after a long battle with cancer. Bill was an extremely valued member of the Economic Development Committee and the 12 North Main Street Task Force. His passing is a terrible loss for the Westford community. Bill was instrumental in helping many of our businesses in town and gave his time generously. He will be missed.

There are several openings on our local boards and committees, including: 35 Town Farm Road Task Force, Agricultural Commission, Clean Energy and Sustainability Committee, Commission on Disability, Communications Advisory Committee, Cultural Council, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee, Dog Park Task Force, Economic Development Committee (alternates), Election Officer, Healthy Westford Committee, Historical Commission, Parkerville Schoolhouse Committee, Parks, Grounds and Recreation Commission, Pedestrian Safety Committee, Permanent Town Building Committee, Recycling Commission, Senior Low Income Disabled Tax Relief Committee, Westford Scholarship and Grant Committee, and Zoning Board of Appeals. I urge you to peruse our website for information about the work of these committees; and if you have interest, please complete a Citizen's Activity form at this link: [Citizen Activity Form](#).

Would you like more detailed information on the Select Board's meetings? Click the following links to access: [Select Board Documents](#) & [Select Board Meeting Videos](#).

I hope you all have a great summer!

Sincerely,



Jodi Ross
Town Manager

Clean Energy and Sustainability Committee

Waste Management Practices Impact Climate Change

The Sustainability portion of the Clean Energy and Sustainability Committee's charge encompasses a large array of citizen behaviors and activities that either contribute to carbon emissions or help sequester carbon and defray those emissions. Westford residents can make a difference every day with their habits and choices.

One of these everyday activities is **solid waste disposal**. Because Westford's trash is incinerated, it produces CO₂ when burned, and therefore the trash you produce contributes to climate change. While relatively small compared to emissions from buildings and transportation, your waste disposal habits are an area where you can reduce emissions today and every day, and, as a consequence, also make money available for other uses in the town budget that is currently spent hauling trash.

The Clean Energy and Sustainability Committee encourages you to:

1. Buy only what you need and will use, and where possible, in minimal, sustainably sourced packaging.
2. Consider how you could reuse, repurpose, share or donate items you no longer need.
3. Read the Recycling Guide recently mailed to your household by the Recycling Commission. You may be surprised by what you don't know. 30% of the items in the trash in Massachusetts could have been recycled.
4. When you have to dispose of something, review where it should go: compost, curbside recycling, store recycling or other local collections, a donation pile, or a spot for a diversion event like an electronic, or hazardous waste collection, and finally the trash.
5. Bookmark the [Recycling Commission Page](#) for easy reference, look things up on the [How-to-Recycle-Most-Everything pdf](#) and place the guide in an easy to reference spot in your home, like on the refrigerator or above your trash can.
6. Consider composting, if you don't already do so, and sequester carbon on your property in your soil. You will be surprised how much of your food waste is water. By keeping that water in your yard, and storing that organic matter in your soil, you won't need to water your landscape as much. By not paying to haul it away by ton, the town will have more money to pay for things you might value more. You don't need to do anything except develop a new habit for where you put your food waste. No turning or gardening required.
7. Attend a composting event hosted by the Westford Recycling Commission on a Saturday in July to learn more.
8. Follow the Select Board as they discuss policies designed to reduce trash.
9. Follow the state legislature as they discuss policies designed to encourage greater recycling and place responsibility for waste disposal in the hands of producers who design products and packaging.
10. Make your voice and your vote heard on these issues.

Net Zero Roadmap Community Survey – Coming Soon!

Westford's Net Zero Road Map Committee is preparing a community survey to assess community beliefs and opinions about climate change and the steps that will be needed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in town. One of the important goals of the survey is to help the committee understand the barriers that are preventing community members from adopting renewable and sustainable practices so that that we can address those issues in the Roadmap to Net Zero Plan. Links to the survey will be available in a future newsletter, the town website, social media and the Westford Climate Action website. Please contribute!

July at the J.V. Fletcher Library

Unless otherwise noted, the following programs are made possible by the Friends of the Library.



Tales and Tales Summer Reading Program for all ages! : This summer we have exciting programs and prizes lined up for [children](#), [young adults](#), and adults! We are offering some virtual programming but the majority of our offerings will take place outside, socially distanced, and in-person! Registration for all three programs is open now! Check out the [Children's Summer Reading page](#), [Teen's Summer Reading page](#), and the Adult's Summer Reading page for more information. Please call or email us with any questions on this very exciting summer-long program.

Camp Read A Lot, Tues., July 20 at 10:30 a.m. Camp Read a Lot has finally moved outside. Gather around our temporary outdoor stage for fun stories, silly songs, socially distanced hula hoops, and fun games! Miss Ellen and Miss Jennifer will lead this program – great for the whole family. Register for this program through the [Library Events Calendar](#). If it rains, we will meet virtually and email you a Zoom link.

Owls of the World: Tues., July 20 at 6:30 p.m. - rain date is Thursday, July 22 at 6:30 p.m. Eyes on Owls introduces you to the owls of New England and beyond. Mark and Marcia share the field marks, signs, and naturalist's skills that you can use to find wild owls without disturbing them. You will meet six live owls (from small to huge) up close. Everyone participates in a hooting lesson and learns tips on how to attract and protect owls near you. This is the perfect program for kids and adults of all ages. Register for this program through the [Library Events Calendar](#).

Virtual Summer Tails: Lobster Tails and Cocktails/Mocktails with Liz Barbour: Thu., July 22 at 7 p.m. Join Liz Barbour from The Creative Feast for this delicious virtual cooking class! Liz will show you how to properly steam your lobster for the best tasting results. Then she'll demonstrate how to make a delicious recipe featuring the lobster tail. Of course you'll need something special to drink with that lobster! Liz will shake up the perfect cocktail/mocktail to go along with your New England lobster tail recipe. Liz will host the program on her Zoom account. Register for this program through our [Library Events Calendar](#) to get the Zoom link. Questions? Email Sarah Regan at sregan@westfordma.gov.

Family Concert with Steve Blunt: Tues., July 27 at 10:30 a.m. There are good reasons why we keep having Steve back to our library - he is a lot fun and a great time! Bring a blanket and spread out on the grass in front of our stage for an outside, socially distanced view. Wear your PJs and pack some snacks and enjoy the show. Register for this program through the [Library Events Calendar](#).

Mother Goose Story Time: Every Thu. at 10:30 a.m. For kids ages 0 and up. Miss Jacki and Miss Nancy will be outside, on stage, and socially distanced every Thursday in July at 10:30 AM. Please preregister so that we know how many to expect and for a zoom link just in case we have to move inside. Tell your friends in other towns to meet you at the library. Please register for this program through the [Library Events Calendar](#). If it rains, we will meet virtually and email you a Zoom link.

Virtual Qigong Class: every Mon. from 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Dvora Eisenstein leads this free recurring Qigong class on Zoom. Qigong is an ancient Chinese health care system integrating slow movements, breathing techniques, and focused intention. Qigong calms your mind, improves your balance, and enhances health. Suitable for all levels of ability and ages. Anyone may join at any time. Hosted and sponsored by the Sunderland Public Library and made available to all Westford residents. To join, use this Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/117278043>

Check out our [Museum Passes page](#) or call the Library for reservations. Unless otherwise noted, our museum passes are generously funded by the Friends of the Library. [Have you joined the Friends yet?](#)

Monday Mystery, Adult Non Fiction, Thursday Night Book Club: All of our adult book clubs welcome new members. Please visit westfordlibrary.org/events/adult-book-clubs/ for more information, reading lists, and upcoming meeting dates!

Quick Links to Our Most Popular Services!

[Book Bundles for Kids, Teens, and Adults](#)

[Programs – Adults](#)

[Programs – Kids](#)

[Programs – Young Adults](#)

If you have questions or need assistance, please call us at 978-399-2300 or send us an email at westfordlibrary@westfordma.gov.

Cameron Senior Center

The Cameron Senior Center welcomes adults ages 55+ for daily programs and services.

Mission Statement: The Council on Aging promotes physical, emotional and economic well-being of older adults in all realms of community life.



Vegetable Distribution - Each Thursday running thru early Fall

We are excited to have our relationship with **Gaining Grounds of Concord** once again offering their organic produce weekly to all Westford residents that meet income guidelines. (Fuel assistance criteria). To participate one must sign an income attestation on the day of produce pick up. This distribution will be held at the Westford Housing Authority at 65 Tadmuck Road in the community center parking lot. People are encouraged to wait in their cars or apartments and not in groups nor in the community center hallway. Because this program is so desirable people often arrive early so, we will pass out disposable numbers starting at 1:00. The freshly picked and packaged vegetables will be prebagged and distributed at 1:30. Any questions call Annette at 978-399-2326.

Middlesex Sheriff Department Is Bringing Pizza, Ice Cream and A Good Time Join us Tuesday, July 20th at 12pm

Come to the Cameron for a fun relaxing afternoon with the Retired Sheriff's from the Middlesex Sheriff Department and enjoy some salad, pizza, and ice cream then play some prize Bingo! Sign up at 978-692-5523.

Movie Night and Bring A Friend August 10th @ 4:30

Come with a friend (age 16+) and enjoy the new *Barb & Star Go to Vista Del Mar*. \$4.00 for a movie, popcorn, refreshments and light meal. Please call to sign up 3 days prior at 978-692-5523.



Check Your Electric Rates- Do you pay more than \$0.10792/kw?

If you have ever signed up with another electric company, you may be paying more than you need to. If the Supplier listed on your National grid bill **isn't** "Constellation" you **aren't in the Town's aggregate program which offers this low rate**. If you are interested in opting out of your current supplier for the low rate of \$0.10792/KW, be sure to check your current contract regarding a fee for breaking current contract. If you want to learn more and/or have questions feel free to reach out to Annette Cerullo, Outreach Coordinator at 978-399-2326.



Westford Senior Center

(Continued on next page)

Cameron Senior Center



Representative James Arciero Annual Cookout Wednesday, August 11th at Noon

We look forward to having Rep. Arciero back at the Cameron for a legislative and local update from Bacon Hill. Also, we anticipate State Senator Ed Kennedy joining in this occasion and are excited to have the Cameron UPBEATS Band play their first concert at our center. So, don't wait to RSVP too long this is always a well-attended event.

Hot Dogs and Tuesday Night BINGO- Open to ages 19+ August 26th Dinner: 4:45 – 6:00pm; BINGO at 7:00pm

Chef Mike and volunteers are ready to help whip up his famous dogs for you. A hot dog, chips, drink and dessert setup for \$3.00. Simply pay at the front desk when you arrive. Bingo follows at 7:00. Bingo will also be on 8/12 at 7:00 with no food prior.



Do you need transportation call the Cameron for our van service?

The Westford Council on Aging Transportation Services are for Seniors 55 or older, disabled and those residents experiencing transportation hardship.

The transportation office can be reached at 978-399-2322 or by calling the Cameron Senior Center at 978-692-5523 and asking for transportation. Medical appointments are our priority although our handicapped accessible vans can take you anywhere within our service area, including local errands.

Our transportation program also transports disabled individuals of any age who have completed the application process through the LRTA. If you have any trouble with this application process, please call us at the transportation office to help at 978-399-2322.

Our drivers are CPR and first aid trained. Some have been trained in defensive driving, passenger assistance, and disability awareness. Some of our drivers have been trained in Dementia, driving while distracted and advanced defensive driving.

We appreciate as much notice as possible so please make sure to call at least 48 hours in advance. For same day changes if the transportation office cannot be reached at 978-399-2322 please call the Cameron Senior Center at 978-692-5523 and speak to the front desk.

Round Trip Service Areas and Donation Fees:

Westford: \$3

Acton, Carlisle, Chelmsford, Groton and Littleton: \$6

Ayer, Concord and Lowell: \$8

General Transportation Hours:

Monday through Friday: 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM, with our last ride being at 3:30 PM. Evening transportation is provided for Cameron Senior Center sponsored events. Town meeting transportation is available. When leaving a message please be sure to leave your name, phone number, date, time and location of your appointment. We will call you back with any questions and to schedule your ride.

To learn more please visit: www.westfordma.gov/coa, [www.facebook.com/Cameron Senior Center/](https://www.facebook.com/Cameron-Senior-Center/), www.youtube.com/channel/UCaNgAZb3tw8EYYQ5bEe7XXg
or simply call 978-692-5523

Health Department

Water Safety for Everyone - Tips for people of all ages to stay safe in and around water

As we move into the summer season, many of us will be opening pools and going to our public beaches. Swimming is a fun activity and a great way to keep cool during the hot summer months, but it's important to know how to stay safe in and around water. Drowning is swift and silent — there may be little splashing or cries for help. It can take as few as 20 seconds to sink below the water and only minutes to drown, but you can stay safe by following these tips — whether around a pond, lake, river, ocean, or pool. Here are some tips provided by Mass.gov



Tips

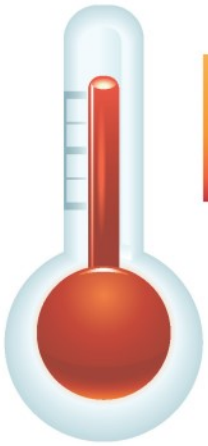
Make sure you know how to swim. If you can't swim, keep to shallow areas or use a U.S. Coast Guard-guard approved life jacket. For a list of places offering swim lessons, view our [Learn to Swim!](#) resources.

- **Swim with a buddy, never alone, even if you are a very good swimmer**
- **Swim in designated areas, with a lifeguard present**
- **Swim sober: avoid drugs and alcohol to stay alert in the water**
- **Do not dive or jump into water that is not at least 12 feet deep. Enter the water feet-first, never dive head-first into a river, lake or pond. You could severely injure your head and neck and drown.**
- **Do not swim during a storm or when there is lightning**
- **Don't swim in an area with strong moving currents in the water. Depth, currents, underwater debris and water temperature change constantly in rivers, lakes, and ponds. Yesterday's safe swimming spot might have hidden dangers today.**
- **Keep a cell-phone handy and know where you are in case you need to call for help**
- **When in a boat, wear a US Coast Guard approved life jacket**

Learn CPR

- The Red Cross offers a wide selection of CPR/AED, first aid, lifeguarding, swimming and water safety, caregiving, disaster response and emergency preparedness training. [Find information on classes.](#)
- For more information, call the State at (617) 624-6060.

Health Department



BEAT THE HEAT: Extreme Heat

Heat-related deaths are preventable

WHAT:

Extreme heat or heat waves occur when the temperature reaches extremely high levels or when the combination of heat and humidity causes the air to become oppressive.

WHO:



Children



Older adults

More males than females are affected



Outside workers



People with disabilities

WHERE:



Houses with little to no AC



Construction worksites



Cars

HOW to AVOID:



Stay hydrated with water, avoid sugary beverages



Stay cool in an air conditioned area



Wear lightweight, light-colored, loose-fitting clothes

(Continued on next page)

Health Department (Beat the Heat Continued)



During extreme heat the temperature in your car could be deadly!

Outside Temperature 80°



Time Elapsed:
20 minutes



Time Elapsed:
40 minutes



Time Elapsed:
60 minutes

HEAT ALERTS: Know the difference.

HEAT OUTLOOK

Minor

Excessive heat event in 3 to 7 days

HEAT WATCHES

Excessive heat event in 12 to 48 hours

HEAT WARNING/ADVISORY

Major

Excessive heat event in next 36 hours

DID YOU KNOW?

Those living in **urban areas** may be at a greater risk from the effects of a prolonged heat wave than those living in rural areas.

Most **heat-related illnesses** occur because of overexposure to heat or over-exercising.

Sunburn can significantly slow the skin's ability to release excess heat.

During 1999–2009, an average of **658** people died each year from heat in the United States.

\$30 BILLION estimated total cost of the 2012 US drought and heatwave.

Recycling Commission

Composting Demonstrations July 17, 24, 31 Old Town Garage at 30 Beacon Street, 9:30 am to 11:00 am

The Westford Recycling Commission (WRC) will show residents how to compost organic material on Saturdays, July 17, 24 and 31 from 9:30-11:00 am. Composting diverts food wastes from the trash and reduces the high cost of Westford's trash collection which increased 9% this year. Organic material can represent up to 20% of the weight of our trash suggesting this is a powerful tool to reduce Westford's trash.

Earth Machine composters will be available to Westford residents at the demonstrations for only \$25. For more information, visit www.westford.gov/recycling. Follow us on FB.

WRC Members and Volunteers Took a MRF Tour

On July 9, some members and volunteers from the WRC (Westford Recycling Commission) were invited to a Materials Recycling Facility (MRF) tour by our recycling vendor, Waste Management. We were able to observe the actual line that materials flow through showing the sorting process and how the sorted product was then prepared for its later transportation to the users of these multiple sorted products. Essentially the comingled mix each of us puts out on the curb is converted into something with increased value for the manufacturers who utilize it. While the value varies according to the commodities market, the overall collection is a positive accomplishment and put to its best reuse.

Here are some important observations and notes to our residents:

- Plastic bags and plastic wrap of any type (packing plastic, package wrapping) are banned from curbside because they wrap around the machinery. Every single night, all the plastic wrap that is accumulated around the moving parts must be removed. Note: **The Rotary sponsored "Bags to Benches" Challenge will resume September 1st** and will take much of this material.
- Plastic water bottles must be empty of waste. Any liquid inside triggers the automation to direct these otherwise recyclable bottles to the trash.
- Pizza boxes, even with grease, can be recycled. (Only excessively greasy boxes need to go in the trash)
- Scrap metal - direct to Westford Metals, do not put in curbside recycling. The only permitted metals are the tins/cans from food and beverages.
- We encourage all residents to read the recently distributed recycling guide. It has very useful information as well as all the information available from our website (www.westford.gov/recycling).

Please visit www.westfordma.gov/recycling
for your recycling and trash questions.
Reduce! Reuse! Repurpose! Recycle!

